



March is....National Social Work Month

Celebrated each March, National Professional Social Work Month is an opportunity for social workers across the country to turn the spotlight on the profession and highlight the important contributions.

The 2014 Social Work Month theme is “All People Matter.” It was chosen to help raise awareness about the American social work profession and commitment to improving social conditions and quality of life opportunities for everyone. Social workers across the globe believe that all people have dignity and deserve respect.

Suggested School and Classroom Activities to Promote National Social Work Month

Activity: Public Address and Recognition

- Have an administrator deliver a brief, weekly, morning announcement supporting the social work profession and/or the school-based social worker (if applicable).

Activity: Open House

- Host an “Open House” in the school social worker’s office for staff, students and parents to visit and learn what services are provided by the social worker.

Activity: Recognition Bulletin Board

- Create a display/bulletin board in a highly visible area of the school that highlights the school social worker(s) and the types of services they provide.

Activity: Special Recognitions

- Distribute to staff members a sharpened pencil with a note saying, “School Social Workers Point You in the Right Direction.”
- Distribute to staff members a glue stick with an attached card stating: “School Social Workers Get You Out of Sticky Situations.”

Activity: Sweet Treat Basket

- Fill a basket with the following



candies: Almond Joy, Mounds, Crunch Bar, Hershey Treasures, Skor, Sweetarts, Lifesavers, and Rocky Road.

- Print the following poem onto visually appealing paper (e.g. decorated cardstock)

*Sometimes life's intense and can lead to **ROCKY ROADS**,
We need help from **SWEETARTS** to lighten the heavy load.
When in a **CRUNCH** that cannot be deployed,
The loving care provided, brings so much **JOY**.
MOUNDS of weight are lifted when you take the time to serve,
The title of **LIFESAVERS** is something deserved.
We are so lucky to **SKOR** people like you,
You are truly **TREASURES** for the awesome work you do.*

Thank you for celebrating March as National Social Work Month!

- Distribute the sweet treats with a copy of the poem or place the basket with treats and copies of the poem in a place where people can help themselves.

For more information, contact LAUSD School Mental Health at (213) 241-3841 and visit the following sites: <http://smh.lausd.net> <http://www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/swmonth/>

Be the Change: Promote Awareness and Stigma Reduction

Educate. Inform staff and students of the work social workers do at schools

Engage. Discuss with students and staff how you can work together to promote the work of school social workers

Empower. Foster resiliency through promoting this year’s theme “All People Matter”

Embrace. Make your office or agency a safe space where all students are welcome

Other Specially Recognized Days in March



National Nutrition Month



The month of March is recognized as National Nutrition Month. It is an educational campaign to focus

attention on the importance of making informed food choices, and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

Suggested School and Classroom Activities

Activity: Poster Contest

- Have students create and submit posters that promote healthy eating and physical activity around the theme of “Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right.”
- Determine a due date (deadline) for submission.
- A panel of judges may select the top 2 or 3 posters that promote healthy eating and physical activity.
- Artists of selected posters should be recognized and/or awarded (i.e. certificates, photo recognition in a school newsletter).
- All posters entered in contest may be displayed throughout the school.

For more information, please visit <http://www.eatright.org/NNM/#>

Self Injury Awareness Day March 1st

Self-injury Awareness Day (SIAD) is an annual global awareness event. The goal is to raise awareness in hope of increasing understanding, reducing stigma, and decreasing the number of people who feel alone and suffer in silence.

Suggested School and Classroom Activities

Activity: Education and Awareness

- Distribute the Self-Injury and Youth handout to school staff. Handout available at <http://suicideprevention.lausd.net>
- Invite the ESC Mental Health Consultant or a Crisis Counseling and Intervention Services (CCIS) staff member to provide training on Self-Injury to staff and/or parents.

- Contact LAUSD School Mental Health at (213) 241-3841 and visit the following websites: <http://smh.lausd.net> <http://ccis.lausd.net>

National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

In 1987, Ronald Reagan proclaimed the month of March as National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. This month's activities are directed toward increasing public awareness of the needs and potential of Americans with developmental disabilities.



Suggested School and Classroom Activities

Activity: “Using one hand day”

- Have students try different activities using only one hand (e.g. tying shoes, lining up for and eating lunch, playing catch, distributing a stack of papers one at a time)
- After the activity, lead a discussion around the challenges they may have experienced. Prompts may include: What if you could not use either hand? What challenges would there be if you were in a wheelchair and could not use your hands?

Activity: “No Words”

- Write a simple sentence on a piece of paper. Examples: The cat sat on a hot tin roof. I feel funny. I want an apple.
- Show this sentence to one student. The student must communicate to the rest of the class what the sentence says without writing, speaking or using any letters of the alphabet.
- After the activity, lead a discussion with the class. Prompts may include: Was it difficult to communicate? What would have helped? How can we communicate with someone who cannot speak? How can we help them communicate?

For more information, please visit, <http://www.specialneedsalliance.org/march-is-developmental-disabilities-awareness-month/>

National Social Work Month Fact Sheet



The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) introduced National Professional Social Work Month for the first time in March 1963. The original purpose was to encourage public support and interest in social work as a profession. NASW was able to create a buzz around Social Work Month by engaging the public through various television advertisement campaigns that aired throughout the sixties. This tactic was successful in the early years, generating more than 35,000 letters of support from the public and attracting media coverage of notable social workers in local newspapers. In 1984, the White House officially recognized March as National Professional Social Work Month.

“Myth vs. Facts”

Myth: Most social workers work for child protective agencies and their job is to remove children from their homes and to break up families.

Fact: There are over 600,000 social workers employed in schools across the nation. Approximately 20% of social workers in the United States practice in hospitals and about 12% practice in medical clinics. In the Los Angeles Unified School District, there are over 300 school social workers performing a variety of services.

Myth: Social workers complete Medicaid applications and distribute government aid.

Fact: Social workers provide direct services to clients, impart information, make community referrals, screen and assess clients, assist in discharge planning, provide mental health services, and intervene in crisis situations. In addition, they provide education for students and families, training for staff and interns, and consultation at the Local, State, and Federal levels.

Myth: Social workers only listen to people talk about their feelings; their “work” is not tangible or quantitative.

Fact: Social workers address people’s feelings and so much more! Social workers provide practical and compassionate guidance to individuals, families, and communities confronting and resolving a variety of dilemmas using evidence based practices such as Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Treatment in Schools. Social workers also work as administrators, policymakers, and researchers.

Fact: About 60% of practicing mental health professionals are clinical social workers. At least two years after completing their master’s degree, clinical social worker must obtain 100 hours of intensive supervision and pass exams to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). LCSW is the highest

level of
education
that a social
work can
receive,
other than
a doctorate
degree in
social work
which is
used for
teaching at
the college
level.



How can I be a part of National Social Work Month?

As an individual, you can raise awareness in your school community.

- **Stay informed** – Know who your school social worker is and how they can help you
- **Fight the stigma** – Remind people, including yourself, that It’s Okay to Get Help and meet with your school social worker
- **Advocate** – Organize a group of students or your class to promote the mental health services available at your school
- **Find help and support** – Contact your school social worker for additional resources or consult with LAUSD School Mental Health at (213) 241-3841

For more information visit:

<http://smh.lausd.net>

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/swmonth/>